

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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17

ACTION SS-30

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R 070804Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6287

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 6625

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, KS

SUBJ: ROKG DOMESTIC POLICY

1. FOLLOWING PRESIDENT PARK'S OCTOBER 1 ARMED FORCES DAY WARNING, SENIOR BLUE HOUSE OFFICIALS HAVE INFORMALLY CONFIRMED TO US THAT GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO FOLLOW TOUCH DOMESTIC POLICY IN PERIOD AHEAD.

2. IN OCT 4 DISCUSSION WITH AMBASSADOR AND GLEYSTEN, PRESIDENTIAL SPECIAL ADVISOR FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS CHOE KYU HA TOLD THEM GOVERNMENT INTENDED TO DEAL FIRMLY WITH DOMESTIC OPPONENTS. CHOE SAID THAT GOVERNMENT NOT PREPARED TO LET SITUATION GET OUT OF HAND AND THAT CRITICISM AND ACTIONS OF OPPONENTS WILL BE KEPT WITHIN BOUNDS. CHOE CONVEYED CLEAR MESSAGE THAT GOVERNMENT NOT PLANNING ANY MAJOR CONCESSIONS TO OPPONENTS IN PRESNET SITUATION.

3. IN DISCUSSION SAME DAY WITH POL COUNS, CHIEF PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SECRETARY KIM SEONG JIN ALSO TOOK VERY TOUGH LINE, INDICATING THAT PRESIDENT PARK IS DETERMINED TO KEEP HIS OPPONENTS ON A VERY SHORT LEASH. KIM SAID THAT GOVERNMENT MIGHT ALLOW SOME MEASURES OF LATITUDE ON ASSEMBLY FLOOR TO OPPONENTS ON GROUNDS OF "PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE." HOWEVER, PRESIDENT WILL NOT TOLERATE EXTREME ACTIONS EITHER IN

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OR OUTSIDE THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY.

4. KIM SAID THAT PRESIDENT HAS CONVEYED INDIRECT WARNING TO NDP LEADER KIM YONG SAM ON LIMITS HE WILL PERMIT KIM TO GO. KIM WAS DELIBERATELY IMPRECISE AS TO WHETHER PRESIDENT THREATENED ANY ACTION IF KIM YONG SAM GOES TOO FAR, BUT KIM INDICATED HE SURE KIM YONG SAM "UNDERSTOOD" THE PRESIDENT'S MEANING.

5. ON QUESTION OF CLEMENCY FOR PRISONERS, KIM SAID THERE ARE EXISTING GUIDELINES AUTHORIZING COURTS TO REDUCE SENTENCES OF "NON-COMMUNIST" STUDENT CASES AS THEY PROCEED UPWARDS. BEYOND THAT THERE MAY BE SOME PRESIDENTIAL ACTION IN REDUCING SENTENCES BUT KIM STRESSED THIS DEPENDENT ON DEVELOPMENTS IN DOMESTIC SITUATION AND HE WOULD NOT PREDICT WHAT IN FACT PRESIDENT WILL DO.

6. IN ADDITION TO ABOVE DISCUSSIONS WEEKEND PRESS IS REPORTING NEW HARD LINE DRP/YUCHONGHOE ATTITUDES ON QUESTION OF ASSEMBLY DEBATE OF CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION AND OTHER POLITICAL SENSITIVE SUBJECTS. ACCORDING PRESS THE TWO PRO-GOVERNMENT PARTIES HAVE DECIDED THEY WILL REACT STRONGLY IF KIM YONG SAM ATTEMPTS TO STRONGLY CHALLENGE THE YUSHIN CONSTITUTION IN HIS ASSEMBLY ADDRESS.
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